

CONSENT AGENDA REQUEST

Sponsor:

Harry F. Atherton, Chairman, Marshall District Supervisor

Board of Supervisors Meeting Date:

October 11, 2007

Staff Lead:

Kristen Slawter, Planner II

Department:

Community Development

Topic:

A Comprehensive Plan Amendment to adopt *The Fauquier County Connections Plan* by reference in Chapter 9-Public Facilities and Utilities and Chapter 10-Transportation.

Topic Description:

The Fauquier County Connections Plan addresses the need for additional trail and greenway connections in the County for pedestrians and bicyclists to libraries, parks, shopping, historical sites and scenic areas, particularly in the nine service districts. The Plan identifies general greenway locations, design guidelines, and maintenance cost estimates for trails as well as recommendations for improving the Fauquier County Subdivision Ordinance to include better sidewalk and trail standards for new development.

Recognizing that trails and greenways contribute to a high quality of life, improved health, and allow for citizens to use sustainable modes of transportation, staff recommends that The Connections Plan be referenced in Fauquier County Comprehensive Plan in Chapter 9-Public Facilities and Utilities and Chapter 10-Transportation.

Topic Update:

The public hearing for this item was closed on September 13, 2007 and scheduled for October 11, 2007 as a consent agenda item. In addition, an afternoon work session has been scheduled with the Fauquier County Department of Parks & Recreation for their presentation of a fiscal impact analysis on existing, County-maintained trails and anticipated maintenance costs to the County associated with this Plan Amendment. The Parks & Recreation Board will also explain the importance of having a network of primary, public trails maintained by the County.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Amendment in May 2007 and unanimously recommended it for approval on June 28, 2007, with the text additions to the Fauquier County Comprehensive Plan and The Fauquier County Connections Plan as represented below. The intent of this language was to clearly state that in the view of the Planning Commission, trail construction and maintenance should not be the responsibility of the County, except in unique circumstances where other private and public groups are unable to assume the burden and where the trails connect to

major centers of activity in service districts.

The following underlined text is recommended to be inserted in The Connections Plan:

Approximately 140 miles of public trails are proposed in The Fauquier County Connections Plan for walkers, bicyclists, and equestrian riders in the service districts. Through public-private partnerships with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), developer commitments and the Fauquier County Capital Improvements Plan as approved by the Board of Supervisors, land acquisition and construction of trails will become realized. The costs and effort associated with trail maintenance will need to be shared amongst the Fauquier County Parks & Recreation Department, VDOT, homeowner associations (HOAs), participating community groups and non-profit organizations. Maintenance costs should be the responsibility of HOAs first, VDOT second and as a last resort, if the trails benefit the County outside neighborhoods, the County could be responsible for the maintenance costs.

The following underlined text is recommended for Chapter 9-Public Facilities and Utilities (page 18) of the Fauquier County Comprehensive Plan to describe The Connections Plan and allow it to be adopted by reference.

Introduction

The Fauquier County Parks and Recreation Board is dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life for all people in Fauquier County. Working in a partnership with the people, the Department shall provide the leadership to assure that citizens receive high quality recreational facilities and services.

Walking and bicycling are two popular activities for recreation and transportation that promote environmental sustainability and good health benefits compared to the automobile. An increasing number of residents have expressed a desire for more pathways that provide safe places to bicycle and walk. The Fauquier County Connections Plan is adopted within the Comprehensive Plan by reference. It describes the need for interconnected greenways within the County and their benefits that add to quality living and tourism opportunities in Fauquier County. The Plan also identifies trail locations within each of the nine service districts and makes recommendations for trail design and maintenance.

The following underlined text is recommended for Chapter 10-Transportation (page 23) of the Fauquier County Comprehensive Plan to describe the relevance of The Connections Plan with respect to transportation and point readers to the appropriate plan for greenways.

FUTURE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ROUTES

Walking and bicycling are two alternative modes of transportation that Fauquier County encourages and supports for public health, recreation and travel.

The Board of Supervisors adopted the Preliminary Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Assessment Plan for Fauquier County in 2001. That plan, and as it is periodically updated, is incorporated into this chapter by reference. The Assessment Plan highlights relevant opportunities in all Service Districts, and it represents an iterative process for improving pedestrian and bicycle access countywide.

~~*Fortunately, information*~~ — *Information developed in this report needs to be considered in the*

strategic planning for future transportation systems. Such coordinated multimodal planning will result in safer, more efficient, long-term local access separated from through traffic. As with highway planning, bicycle and pedestrian planning needs to be coordinated with VDOT.

The Fauquier County Connections Plan (2007), adopted by reference in the Fauquier County Comprehensive Plan, focuses on the need for safe pathways and greenways for pedestrians and bicyclists in the County. Greenway locations for each of the nine service districts are identified, as well as design recommendations that will promote safe travel. Design principles and standards for each type of pathway (e.g. multiple-purpose, greenway, equestrian) will need to be defined and considered for inclusion in the Fauquier County Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances and the Design Standards Manual (DSM) so that trails built by different entities are consistent, and provide safe and adequate connectivity where possible.

Trails, bike paths and similar pedestrian connectors are a low County priority outside the designated service districts, unless such connectors provide key links to and between centers of major activity. Facilities outside the Service Districts may be completed as part of a VDOT-funded secondary or primary road improvement project, by developers, or as part of a Board of Supervisors-approved project through the 5-Year Capital Improvements Program. At the time of dedication or proffered rezoning, the County's standard process is to review the cost and benefits of each discrete proposal. Considerations shall include the type of trail (e.g. multiple-use versus blue way, greenway and equestrian) and maintenance cost and responsibility.

Action Requested of the Board of Supervisors:

Conduct a work session with the Fauquier County Department of Recreation and the Parks and Recreation Board, and consider adoption of the attached resolution of approval.

Topic History:

The Fauquier County Connections Plan was prepared under the guidance of the Parks and Recreation Department by Toole Design Group, LLC and Earth Design Associates, Inc. and subsequently reviewed by a Citizen Focus group comprised of land use and trail advocates from across the county. Three review meetings were held in early 2006. The revised plan was then forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Board where a public hearing was held at their June 7, 2006 regularly scheduled meeting.

A draft plan was then forwarded to Planning Commission in August 2006 with subsequent work sessions held in September 2006, and February through April 2007. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Amendment in May 2007 and unanimously recommended it for approval on June 28, 2007.

Financial Impacts Analysis:

Information will be provided by the Department of Parks & Recreation at the October 11, 2007 work session with the Board of Supervisors.

Identify any other Departments, Organizations or Individuals that would be affected by this request:

Fauquier County GIS Department
Fauquier County Parks & Recreation Department

Attachments:

1. Resolution of Approval
2. Fauquier County Connections Plan available online:
http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments/parksrec/index.cfm?action=fccp_toc
3. Fauquier County Connections Plan maps as amended by the Fauquier County Planning Commission:
 - [Bealeton Service District](#)
 - [Calverton Village Service District](#)
 - [Catlett Village Service District](#)
 - [Marshall Service District](#)
 - [Midland Village Service District](#)
 - [New Baltimore Service District](#)
 - [Opal Service District](#)
 - [Remington Service District](#)
 - [Warrenton Service District](#)